

School, Home, and Office: Examples of Inhalants and Safer Alternatives

Product	Source of Inhalant	Prevention Strategies		
		Use Water-Based Products	Supervise Use of Solvent-based Products	Alternatives
General Supplies	Cements, glues (including rubber cement)	✓	✓	Avoid products with toluene and xylene
	Typewriter correction fluid, printing inks	✓	✓	Use "Correction Tape"
	Magic markers, dry erase markers	✓	✓	Use "Low Odor" and/or non-toxic markers, discourage sniffing scented markers
	Spray paints and clear finishes	✓	✓	
Cleaning Supplies	Any product in an aerosol can		✓	Use hand pumps instead of aerosol cans
	Aerosol air fresheners and deodorizers		✓	Use solid air fresheners
	Computer cleaner ("gas duster")		✓	Use canned carbon dioxide
Garage/Shop Supplies	Paints, varnishes, stains, paint thinner, lacquer thinner, spray lubricant, contact cement	✓	✓	
	Gasoline		✓	
Butane Fluid	Lighters, replacement fluid		✓	
Auto	Degreasers, spray lubricants, solvents, Freon®, brake fluid, gasoline, lacquers, car paint		✓	
Health and Beauty	Nail polish and nail polish remover, hair spray		✓	
	Deodorants		✓	Use stick deodorants rather than aerosol
Cooking Supplies	Cooking spray		✓	Use oil in a spray pump
	Whipping cream in aerosol cans, whipping cream cartridges (whippets)		✓	Use whipped cream in a tub or make from scratch

Strategies for Decreasing the Risk of Inhalant Abuse

1. Identify products that can be abused. One clue is a label warning: "Intentional misuse by deliberately concentrating and inhaling the contents can be harmful or fatal." (From a can of cooking spray); "Avoid breathing vapors." (From a can of paint); "Use in a well ventilated area." (From a can of spray lubricant).
2. Find non-toxic substitutes. Many products such as correction fluid, glues, magic markers, paints and stains have 'water based' or 'non-toxic' versions. Be aware that some products marked with an "AP Non-Toxic" label contain solvents and are being abused by students. (AP = Approved Product)
3. When a safer product cannot be substituted, use under close supervision. Account for usage, check product inventory going in and out, and be aware of disappearing supplies. Care in storage and adult supervision is essential. Take frequent breaks, use products in areas with open windows/doors and sufficient fresh air if the product is not being used outside. Use appropriate safety masks with special filters.
4. Don't discuss specific products as inhalants - this may arouse curiosity and lead to increased experimentation. Teach children about the dangers of vapors and gases and about safe use of products. Avoid making the connection that these products can be used as drugs and always stress that these products are dangerous *poisons, toxins, and pollutants*. A chart like the one above is intended for adults only.

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Maine Inhalant Abuse Prevention Work Group

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For more information about inhalants please contact

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